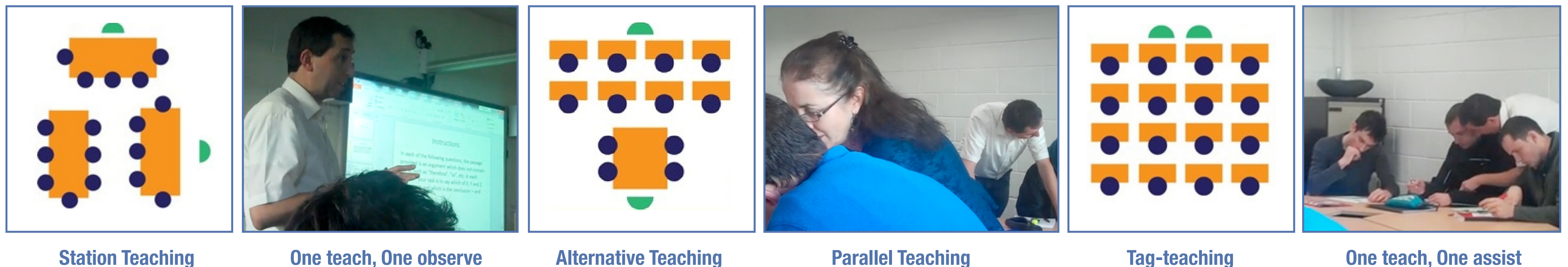


# The Lecturer-as-Learner; A Critical Analysis of a Team Teaching Pilot Programme

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Station Teaching

One teach, One observe

Alternative Teaching

Parallel Teaching

Tag-teaching

One teach, One assist

## Background

In an attempt to displace traditional lecturing hierarchies with a co-learning dynamic, the lecturer-as-learner paradigm was explored in GMIT Letterfrack. An action research study was carried out in the context of a final year level 8 degree Professional Studies module (2012-2013) which had a cohort of nineteen students. Two lecturers piloted a team teaching model of delivery in order to explore the effectiveness of parallel teaching, alternate teaching, and co-teaching formats. A co-learning model was adopted, where lecturers participated in the dual roles of lecturer and learner, in structured dialogue with students. This study had two strands; the first, a participating lecturer, conducted an in-depth critical reflection on his team teaching experience, the second a participating student, conducted a final year thesis on the effectiveness of the team teaching delivery.

## Lecturer perspective

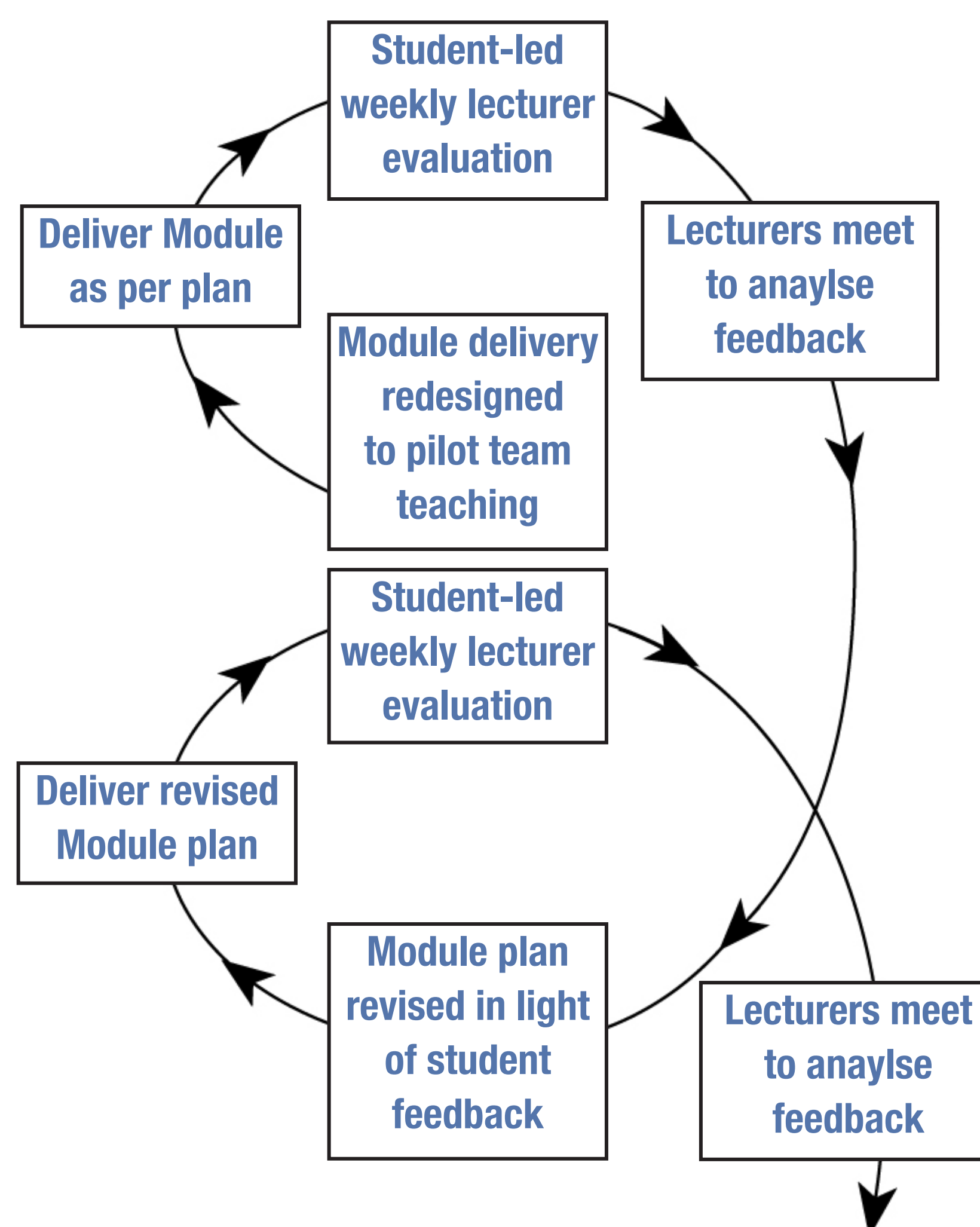
This work is informed by the philosophy of **Action Research**, specifically the idea that one's own practice is the subject of the research and that there is a constant cycle of self-evaluation seeking to improve one's practice.

This pilot initiative in team teaching, in conjunction with the student led evaluations, reversed the traditional classroom roles and repositioned the lecturer as student.

## Methodology

A qualitative review of a single case where the primary data sources were:

- Written feedback from 19 students over a period of nine weeks
- Students reflections/feedback via an online Moodle forum in week 10
- Reflections from both teachers in weeks two and six
- Lecturer interviews from undergraduate study.



## Learner perspective

*"Variety of topics, group work was short but good, it was active and engaging".*

*"Team teaching was good, more collaborative, handout with good knowledge, activity was related, and talk was good".*

*"I thought that both lecturers would teach the class as a group sharing their time management throughout the lesson. As a result this is what happened and I thought it was a success"*

*"Learned a lot more than having one lecturer."*

*"I found that there was a lot of input from the group and that this was taken on by the lecturers. The ideas were well developed throughout the discussion".*

## Methodology

- A case study of a pilot initiative in team teaching at GMIT
- Interviews and questionnaires completed by third level lecturers
- Student evaluation forms
- Video analysis

## Conclusion

The research found that, as the module progressed, there were significantly fewer negative critiques of performance and increasing satisfaction with the delivery of the module, since lecturers organically addressed student needs within the lecturer-as-learner framework. Students cited the variety of approaches, mix of personalities and richer discussion as further positive factors. Lecturers cited a co-sharing of knowledge and expertise and increased motivation when working with a committed colleague. Compatibility between team teachers was considered to be a crucial factor. Negatively, the financial cost of team teaching was recognised as a significant prohibitory factor, and planning time was significantly more extensive given the structured relationship between critique/evaluation and forward planning.